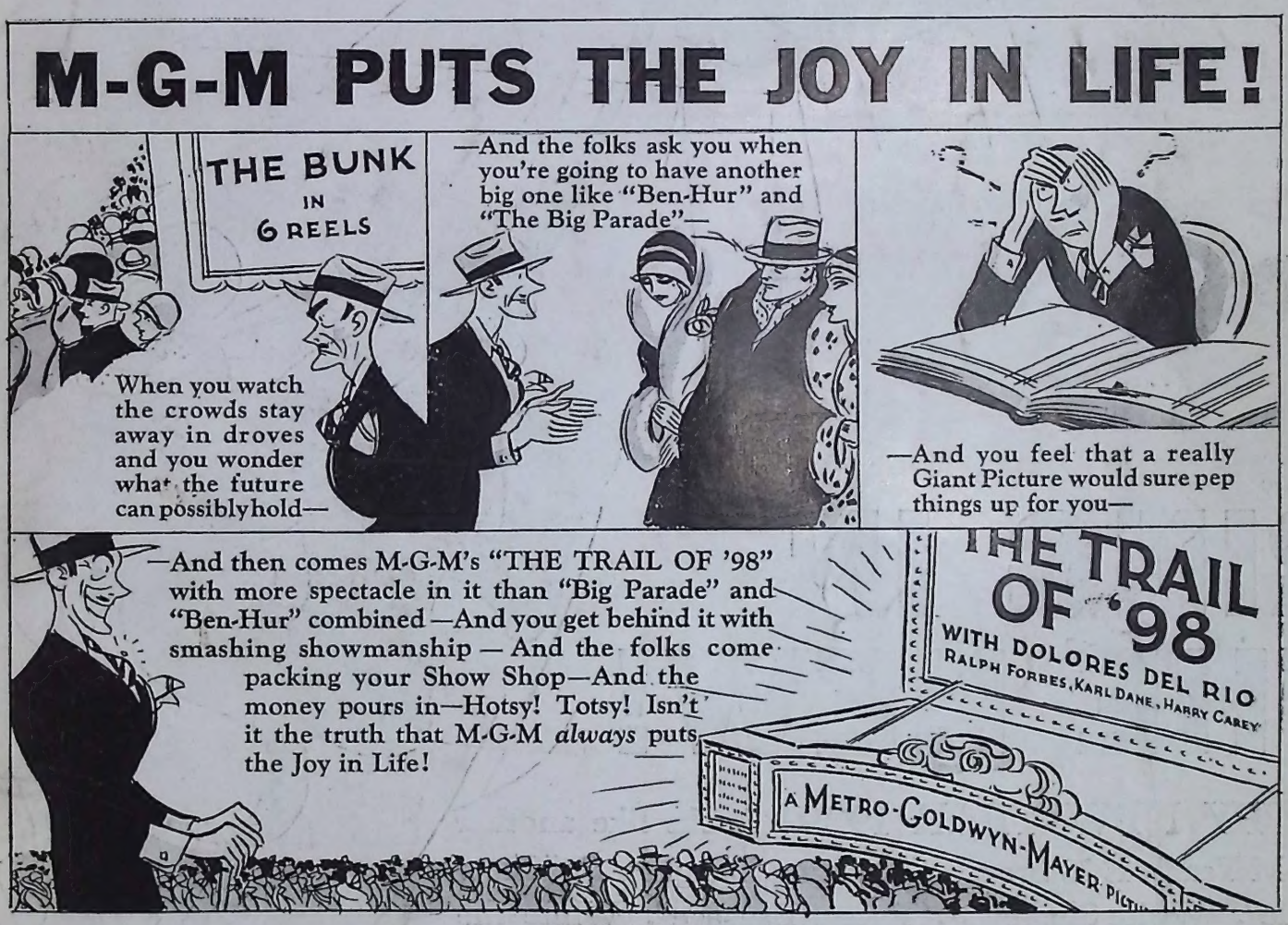
CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST

. 20, No. 36 TORONTO 2, CANADA January 5th, 1929


M-G-M PUTS THE JOY IN LIFE!
THE BUNK IN 6 REELS
When you watch the crowds stay away in droves and you wonder what the future can possibly hold—
—And the folks ask you when you're going to have another big one like "Ben-Hur" and "The Big Parade"—
—And you feel that a really Giant Picture would sure pep things up for you—
—And then comes M-G-M's "THE TRAIL OF '98" with more spectacle in it than "Big Parade" and "Ben-Hur" combined—And you get behind it with smashing showmanship — And the folks come packing your Show Shop—And the money pours in—Hotsy! Totsy! Isn't it the truth that M-G-M always puts the Joy in Life!
THE TRAIL OF '98
WITH DOLORES DEL RIO
RALPH FORBES, KARL DANE, HARRY CAREY
A METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER PICT...
Member of Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc

PUBLISHED BY

CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST COMPANY LIMITED

259 SPADINA AVENUE, TORONTO 2

BN. 18

RING IN THE NEW!

HAPPY NEW YEAR 1929! Looks like another M-G-M Year! 1928 brought "Dancing Daughters", "Show People", "White Shadows", "Excess Baggage", "While the City Sleeps", "Masks of the Devil", "West of Zanzibar", and other M-G-M hits! 1929 brings "The Trail of '98" (*Dolores Del Rio*), "A Woman of Affairs" (*Gilbert-Garbo*), "Alias Jimmy Valentine" (*Wm. Haines*), "The Flying Fleet" (*Novarro*) and more Big Ones! Stick to M-G-M and wear diamonds and smiles in the New Year with the Happiness Boys—

M-G-M

Canadian Moving Picture DIGEST

Established in 1915 for Exhibitors
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RAY LEWIS
Editor and Managing Director

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Vol. 20, No. 36. TORONTO, CANADA January 5th, 1929

Twenty-One Class "A's" 1928

BETWEEN the season of 1928-29 there have been twenty-one Class "A's" reviewed and scheduled by The Digest.

To be in the Class "A" classification, indicates that the picture must be a thoroughbred, a blue-ribbon winner. It must have a box-office quality and artistic quality, story value, direction value, players value. It must possess those qualities for which producers strive, and of which exhibitors dream. It must have the "It" qualification which finds a responsive appeal from the majority. It must be "the light that lighteth the world," and not "the light that is hidden under a bushel."

December 31st, 1927, The Digest registered "The Gaucho," a Douglas Fairbanks production—Class A.

January 14th, 1928, we registered "Wings," Paramount; "Seventh Heaven," Fox; "Sorrel and Son," United Artists, in the Class A group.

February 4th, we recorded "Ben Hur," Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's great achievement as a Class A; and on February 18th, "Beau Sabreur," Paramount, received the thoroughbred classification.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "The Student Prince" was reviewed February 25th, as a Class A; and on March 3rd, "The Divine Woman," with Greta Garbo and Lars Hansen presented at Loew's, Toronto, and directed by Victor Seastrom, made the box-office sound like a miracle.

On this same date we classified Universal's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" as a Class A.

April 21st, we find Harold Lloyd, excelling himself in "Speedy," a Class "A" Paramount comedy, and on April 28th, there is Marion Davies in "The Patsy," directed by King Vidor, who permits her to go the limit in the presentation of her versatile talents. It's a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

On May 5th, "Bringing Up Father" went over as a Class A. Produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and featuring Marie Dressler and Polly Moran.

"The Patent Leather Kid," a First National Class A, had Richard Barthelmess as its star.

"Man and Woman," May 12th, another Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Class A with John Gilbert and Jeanne Eagles.

May 19th, presented Gloria Swanson in one of the best parts of her career "Sadie Thompson" of "Rain" fame, United Artists.

"Chicago," another Class A, Phyllis Haver and Victor Varconi, Pathe - DeMille.

June 2nd, we find "Surrender," as a Class A feature. This is a Universal, with Mary Philbin.

June 9th gave us another Universal Class A, "Love Me and the World is Mine."

September 15th, "The Cardboard Lover," Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

On October 6th, Tiffany-Stahl gave us a Class A in "Wild Geese."

October 6th, brought us "The Two Lovers," with Vilma Banky, that seductive and alluring blonde, and Ronald Colman, who looks good enough for any woman to love. United Artists.

"The Street Angel" was nearly in the Class of "Seventh Heaven," both Fox productions.

"Show Folks" was a Marion Davies big comedy picture under the protectorate of "Leo," the Lion, and it roared out its Class A position without any opposition.

"Simba," November 17th, was the Mr. and Mrs Martin Johnson's unusual and stirring story.

November 17th gave us "Four Sons," a Fox-John Ford Class A.

December 1st, 1928, gave us a Universal Classic in "The Man Who Laughs."

Ray Lewis

RAY PRESENTS

RAY LEWIS

APOLOGIES are due to Mr. H. M. Thomas for such a long tie-up on his letter, regarding "Sound Pictures," which is too good not to use for publication, but which was crowded out among the various items which presented themselves.

I believe Mr. Thomas does not quite understand the editor's viewpoint in connection with the "new idea" in respect to "Sound," "Synchronized" and "Talking Pictures."

THE EDITOR feels that insofar as "Talking Pictures" are still-imperfected, it might be better to wait for a more perfected addition to the silent film, or stick to music and song, which is receiving so much praise.

The editor has seen "The Jazz Singer," "The Singing Fool," and thought these picture great. The editor has viewed many features which had dialogue in the nature of news reels, and enjoyed them.

THE EDITOR believes that talking news reels will become a permanent institution, that synchronized pictures will remain permanently with us, but that eventually the public will tire of dialogue.

The editor has seen "The Terror," it was a novelty, interesting, several of the voices were excellent, some not so good. "On Trial," was one hundred per cent. good. "Interference" is another 100 per cent., but your editor loves the silent drama, the film that grips you without the necessity of having the characters talk.

THE EDITOR recalls "Ben Hur," "Old Ironsides," "The Merry Widow," "The Marriage Circle," "The Student Prince," "Flesh and the Devil," "Don Juan," "Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde," "The Way of All Flesh," "Variety," "The Last Command," "The Patriot," "Beau Geste," "The Sea Beast," "The Beloved Rogue," "The Big Parade," "The Last Laugh," "Ramona," Douglas Fairbanks' spirited romances, Chaplin's comedies, "Resurrection," "Sorrell and Son," "Wings," "The Woman of Paris," and so many more that it is difficult to remember them — all silent dramas, but with a heart and box-office appeal sufficiently strong to make profits and to make memories.

In taking a review of the position of the Silent Film, the editor is not taking into consideration those pictures which made such a lasting impression, aided by a synchronization of music and song — "Seventh Heaven," for instance. Could dialogue have helped this picture?

"TALKING PICTURES," "Synchronized Pictures," have certainly revolutionized the Film Industry. What will remain permanent out of the innovation will present itself when the novelty wears off; perhaps by that time the imperfections will have become perfected; and the objections will have become removed. In the meantime, not having installations appears to be a theatrical drawback.

Pictures are being produced with "Sound"; and the showman who runs the Silent Film today is certainly working against a handicap. What may happen tomorrow does not perhaps concern us, the proverb says, "Make hay while the sun shines."

TOMORROW may provide another invention which will attach itself to that which we now have. We may even arrive at a time when the theatre which advertises silent films may be looked upon as a recreational asset. The public is a fickle institution; and the only way to cater to the public, is to provide that entertainment which it demands.

Some exhibitors may contend that installation is expensive, but if you can get the money out of the public to pay for your investment, you already have a profit, in that you retain your patronage, and undoubtedly there will be some extra material profits accrue to your policy of following "The Leader of the Band," which means installations. *See page 9 for Mr. Thomas' letter.*

"GIVE the little gal a hand" appears to have hit the right spot; and I wish to take this opportunity of thanking those who have so readily responded with a renewal of their subscriptions.

It is very gratifying to have this concrete demonstration that Canadians want their own Trade paper and are willing to pay for the service it is giving them.

I WISH to also thank all those represented in the Christmas issue of The Digest for their support. I have been told that The Digest was a real Christmas pudding. It was your co-operation which made it. It was a case of many cooks making the pudding good, which reminds me of a real Christmas pudding which came from Colonel Bromhead and Mr. Reginald Bromhead of Gaumont British, all the way from Bond St., London, England, and which was partaken of with particular relish!

Talk about looking for "thrills" in life, in pictures, when I opened that package and found that my good friends, Col. Bromhead and Mr. Reginald Bromhead had sent me an English pudding from Stewart's, who make puddings for H. M. King George V. of England, I said, "Some class to your Ray Lewis," "God Save the King, His pudding-maker, the Bromheads, the Gaumont British, God save us all!"

IT WAS just before the New Year. I had not made any resolutions, or said any prayers; but the sight of that pudding, the thought behind it, made me feel religious, if one might be permitted to be religious belonging to the Moving Picture Industry; and I availed myself of the opportunity to pass a few prayers along.

Thanks again for the subscriptions, for the co-operation, for your good wishes, and may 1929 prove its optimistic beginning.

(Continued on Page 5)

Ray Presents

(Continued from Page 4)

May all these good prophecies come true, and may their good fortune link itself up with you.

PHIL HAZZA showed The Digest to the hotel manager in Chicago; and cashed as many cheques as he wished to. It proved a sufficient means of identification to "get the money" — and in Chicago. There goes another button elevating The Digest's chest!

Montreal, Que.
January 1, 1929

Ray Lewis,
Canadian Moving Picture Digest,
259 Spadina Ave.,
Toronto, Ont.

Sincere congratulations on your purchase of Digest. Success. Happy New Year.

MICKEY DUNNING,
Park Verdun.

P.S.—Mailing two subscriptions for twenty-ninth Park and Century Theatres.

December 28, 1928.

Miss Ray Lewis,
Moving Picture Digest,
259 Spadina Ave.,
Toronto, Ontario.

Dear Miss Lewis—

Enclosed herewith you will please find our cheque in the amount of five dollars ($5.00), covering subscription to the Canadian Moving Picture Digest as suggested in a folder just received from you.

Hoping that you will find this in order, and extending to you our sincere wish that the New Year may be one of success and happiness, we are,

Yours sincerely,
H. A. COOPER,
Secretary-Treasurer,
Thunder Bay Films, Limited.

Norwich, Dec. 17, 1928.

Miss Ray Lewis,
Moving Picture Digest,
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Miss Lewis—

Enclosed find cheque for $5.00 to cover subscription.

Wishing you compliments of the season and continued success, I remain,

Yours very truly,
CHAS. W. BATES,
Lyric, Norwich.

December 17th, 1928.

Canadian Moving Picture Digest,
Toronto, Ont.

My Dear Miss Lewis—

Sure we will "Give the Little Gal a hand," and we are enclosing cheque for $5.00 as subscription for 1929. Wouldn't miss the little Digest for anything in the world.

Here's wishing you the compliments of the season,

Yours sincerely,
W. P. WILSON,
Pantages, Edmonton, Alta.

December 22, 1928.

Ray Lewis,
Canadian Moving Picture Digest,
259 Spadina Avenue,
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Ray—

Enclosed please find cheque for $5.00 for subscription to your Digest. Very glad to see you have acquired this paper for yourself and hope you make a big success of it.

Wishing you the compliments of the season, I am,

Yours very truly,
J. SHEA,
Shea's Hippodrome, Toronto.

Saskatoon Dec. 19, 1928.

Herewith please find cheque to cover year's subscription.

J. L. STEWART,
Manager, Victoria Theatre.

Digby, N.S.

Merry Christmas and good luck. Enclosed find $5.00, subscription.

C. E. WALKER,
Bijou Dream Theatre.

GALT FLOATS CAPITAL FOR LOCAL THEATRE

Feeling that other towns were getting the country trade because of the lack of an attractive theatre locally, the recently established Board of Trade at Galt, Ontario, with its 353 members, has floated a new theatre project, an allotment of stock being sold to merchants and other business men within two weeks. R. O. McCullough, Galt Manufacturer, has charge of the project.

A permit for $45,000 has been issued to the Famous Players Canadian Corporation authorizing interior alterations and installation of balconies in the Capitol Theatre, Edmonton, Alberta. According to present plans the interior of the house will be completely renovated and redecorated.

Oscar Hanson Presides Tiffany-Stahl Convention

L. A. Young, President, Grant L. Cook, Secretary-Treasurer of Tiffany-Stahl Present

Oscar Hanson is right at the bat, stepping over the Canadian border into New York, and headed for Chicago, where he presided over what has been termed the best Tiffany-Stahl convention on record.

Thirty branch managers came to confer, to learn and to suggest how to put Tiffany-Stahl's program over in the degree which it merited.

Mr. L. A. Young, President of the company, Mr. Grant L. Cook, Sec'y-Treasurer, attended lending the weight of their presence to the occasion, backing up "Our Oscar" for his Home Run Record. Thirty branch managers and divisional representatives attended, including George Jessel, Tiffany's box-office star, whose feature, "Lucky Boy" was screened. "This picture is in nine reels, 6,500 feet of it dialogue, Jessel sings seven songs," and states Mr. Hanson, "It is 100% perfect. I would not make such a statement until I had seen it. It's there, boys, and will be released at an early date in Canada."

In an interview with The Digest, Mr. Phil Hazza, Canadian General Manager, states that the schedule of releases in 1928-29 will be fulfilled. Each of the ten special productions will have a synchronized song theme, made on a record, and not on the film; and one will be delivered with each of the ten specials to exhibitors. Manny Brown, well-known in Canada has been appointed Southern Divisional Manager with headquarters at Los Angeles.

JESSEL IN "WAR SONG" HARRIS THEATRE

Delegates to the Tiffany-Stahl Convention, Chicago, were the guests of George Jessel, star of the feature, "Lucky Boy" at the Harris Theatre last Friday, where Jessel is starring in "The War Song."

THEATRICAL SPORTS IN CAPITAL CITY

The Theatrical Duck Pin Bowling League of Ottawa, Ontario, has started its second season with six teams instead of three as before. One new team has been entered by the Moving Picture Operators Union and the theatres represented comprise B. F. Keith's, the Galvin and Russell Theatres. A handsome trophy has been presented by J. M. Franklin, manager of Keith's who is also sponsoring the Big Six Hockey League, a prominent local ice hockey circuit.

Five Interesting British Films

BROUGHT TO AMERICA BY S. W. SMITH

Mr. S. W. Smith, British film pioneer and Managing Director of the British Lion Film Corporation, one of the most go-ahead of England's new producing companies, who arrived at New York, December 24th, on the S. S. Majestic, to look into "talkies" and general market conditions.

WHEN Mr. S. W. Smith, Managing Director of the British Lion Film Corporation, Ltd., landed in New York from the S S. Majestic, on December 24th, he had with him copies of five films produced by the British Lion Film Corporation, Limited, during 1928. These are "Chick," "The Ringer," "The Forger," "The Man Who Changed His Name," and "The Flying Squad."

"Chick," a romantic comedy drama, the adventures of a penniless insurance clerk who becomes a peer, is on somewhat different lines to the usual Edgar Wallace mystery. An interesting feature of this film, which stars Bramwell Fletcher, a young English stage actor, who is at present considering a substantial offer from Al. Woods to appear on Broadway, is a sequence depicting the actual initiation ceremony of a peer in the English House of Lords.

"The Ringer" is world famous as a mystery play having achieved popularity all over the Continent as well as in every town in the United Kingdom, and as far East as India. Leslie Faber, who played the title role on the London stage, has the same part in the film, with Annette Bensen, one of the livest personalities amongst England's feminine stars, playing opposite. Arthur Maude, the director of a number of successful films in Hollywood, produced this film.

Lilian Rich has her first film part in her own country in "The Forger," which is adapted from the novel.

"The Man Who Changed His Name" and "The Flying Squad" were both popular stage plays.

The former is a comedy drama of mistaken identity, in which the action ranges from murder and lynching in a Canadian backwoods town to the philandering of a discontented wife on board a society yacht at the famous Cowes regatta — an interesting sequence, in which numerous famous yachts, including the King's yacht, "Britannia" with their Majesties on board, provide a glittering background.

The latter is a real thriller, with settings in Limehouse, the East End underworld of London. Arthur Maude has again been responsible for the direction of "The Flying Squad."

"I have produced too many pictures myself," said S. W. Smith, "not to know the handicap of poor studios and inadequate equipment and now, when keen competition has made only the survival of the best possible, the finest studios and most up-to-date technical complement are absolutely necessary before any attempt is made to make pictures fit to take their place in the world's market. Nobody nowadays will go and see a badly lighted, cramped film such as they might have years back. Such terrific technical strides have been made, such amazing effects have been obtained, mainly up to the present, unfortunately, in American and Continental films that we have a very high standard to compete with.

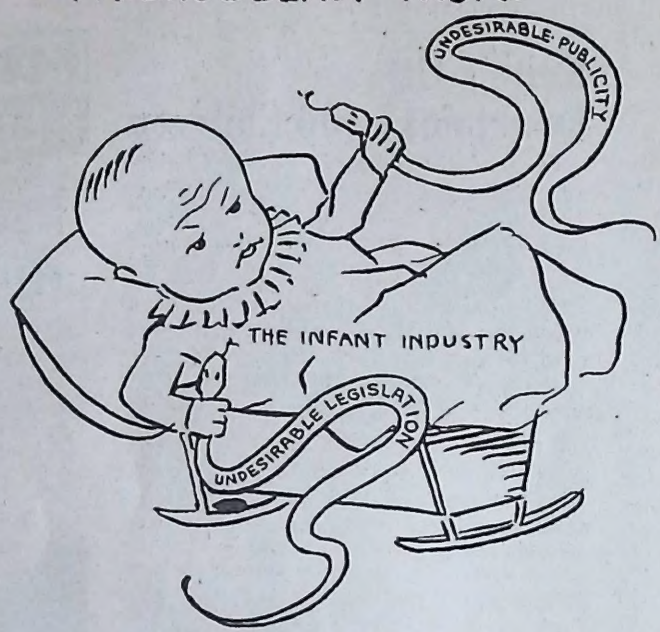
Of all works of art, a motion picture is surely less of an individual or personal triumph than a triumph of co-operation. A brilliant actor or actress can fail under direction, a finely acted production inadequately photographed can be ruined, and the cameraman is equally dependent on a hundred and one technical details of lighting. That is why the first thing that sensible British producing companies thought about at the commencement of the great British film revival last year was the obtaining and re-equipping of good studios. The British Lion Film Corporation Ltd., inaugurated at the end of last year, with Edgar Wallace, a novelist of amazing popularity, as its chairman, and the filming of his many successes as its immediate object, wasted no time over the obtaining of this first requirement, and when we purchased the fine freehold studios of George Clarke Productions at Beaconsfield, it was generally agreed that the company had made an excellent start.

A scene from the new British film, "Chick," adapted from a novel by the famous Edgar Wallace, in which the actual initiation ceremony of a new peer into the English House of Lords is shown. Bramwell Fletcher, who is the young peer, is a young English stage actor who is at the moment considering a substantial offer from Al Woods to appear on Broadway. The British Lion Film Co. received every assistance from the authorities in making this sequence.

"SILENT PICTURES"

As Seen by The Editor

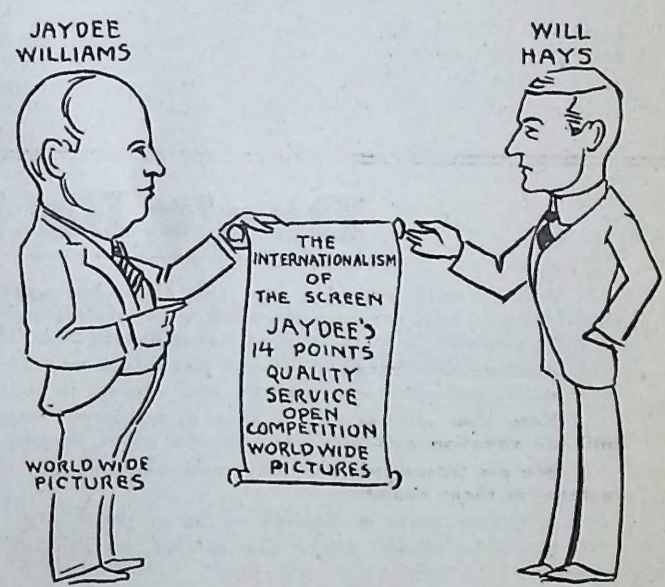
THE INFANT INDUSTRY PERFORMING A HERCULEAN TASK.



Here is the Infant Industry struggling like Hercules in his cradle, with two serpents, intent on conquering "undesirable publicity" and "undesirable legislation." When Hercules as an infant was found mastering two serpents, it was prophecied that he was destined to take his place among the Immortals. With the Industry it is still a struggle, because the world still regards it as an Infant. In 1929, we will show the world we have grown up, conquer our enemies and assume the potentialities of our Immortality.

PEACE AT ANY PRICE IS THE POLICY OF THE FILM LEAGUE OF NATIONS

When Mr. Sam Harris of the Cinema, London, presented a loving cup to Dr. Giannini, as a symbol of Anglo-American amity, he perhaps "builded better than he knew." Dr. Giannini was presented with the cup, representing that person who had contributed the greatest film service for an Anglo-American film friendship during 1928. The cup-giving is to be perpetuated, and as long as the United States and the British Empire strive to create a service towards Anglo-American film peace, the quota, tariff, and other legislative irritations will be as unnecessary as a chalk line defining the border which divides the United States and Canada.



JAYDEE:- MY DEAR GENERAL WHY NOT BE BEFORE THE TIMES THAN BEHIND THE TIMES?
GEN. HAYS:- THOSE ARE MY SENTIMENTS.

"Jaydee's" fourteen points which he has handed to General Hays embraces what "Jaydee" demands in the imported product which he intends to distribute in the U. S., and Canada under the trademark of World Wide Pictures. "Jaydee" and General Will Hays are linking themselves with the intellectual and economic, the progressive movements of the day, International good-will, world friendships, with the screen taking its place, like the League of Nations, the Locarno and Kellog Peace Pacts, for international understanding, racial good-will and the establishment of a world's reciprocal trade and commerce upon a foundation of peace.

Roddick Sensational With "The Red Dance"

Publishes Personal Wire Which Excites Public's Curiosity.

Advertising that had the populace by the ears and gave Canadian Officialdom a distinct shock was used in the newspapers of London, Ontario, by R. S. Roddick, recently appointed manager of the Capitol Theatre of that city for the presentation of "The Red Dance" as a sound attraction. A sensation was caused by the naive references to the censor board, seizure of the advertising matter by the Canadian Customs and other hot stuff.

The newspaper display appeared as a telegram to Roddick from the Toronto film exchange and nothing like it had ever appeared in the Canadian press before — with the author still living. The facsimile wire read as follows:

"If Dolores Del Rio's new picture, 'The Red Dance' is released without cutting by board you will have it for London to open Monday, December 17, exactly as shown in New York with complete sound and music accompaniment. Doubtful however if it will be passed without cutting. If they cut it then it cannot be shown as a sound picture. Picture rather daring so be careful in advertising. If it gets through complete it will be the best possible bet to bring in pre-Christmas crowds as picture is splendid romance of strong drama, big scenes, luxurious settings and packed with action and great thrills from start to finish. Original advertising held by Customs as too hot for Ontario but am rushing you special material from our own studios which will have to do. Will advise tomorrow if picture gets past Board. Regards."

The telegram was signed by D. O. Byrne, booker of the Toronto film renting office.

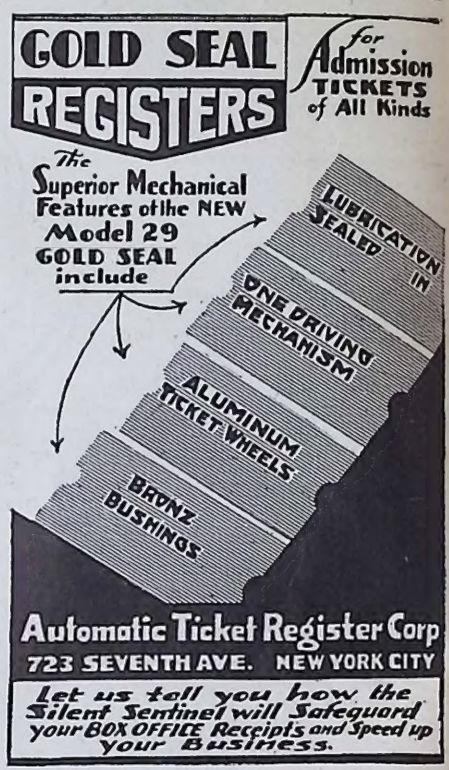
Keith's Ottawa Entertains 2,800 Children

One of the greatest of all Christmas community performances in Canada was the fifth annual orphans' show at B. F. Keith's Theatre, Ottawa, under the auspices of the Ottawa Rotary Club. Arrangements were made by J. M. Franklin, manager, who is an officer of Ottawa Rotary. More than 2,800 children were present and they all received presents. A feature was the presentation of an engraved watch to a young local hero who had rescued three small children after they had gone through the ice on the river.

"Big Boy," the wonder kid, has five more of his two-reel funfests forthcoming. The most beloved child of the screen has a line-up of comedy material that augurs well for everyone concerned. Predictions have it that the coming efforts of the Juvenile Star will transcend everything he's done in the past — and that's going some.

Fishers Theatres Limited Building New Theatre

The Fisher Theatres Limited theatre in Lethbridge, Alta., which is being erected at a cost of $100,000 is well on its way to completion. It is two stories and a basement in height, 75 by 125, of reinforced concrete, brick and steel construction.


GOLD SEAL REGISTERS
for Admission TICKETS of All Kinds
The Superior Mechanical Features of the NEW Model 29 GOLD SEAL include
LUBRICATION SEALED IN
ONE DRIVING MECHANISM
ALUMINUM TICKET WHEELS
BRONZ BUSHINGS
Automatic Ticket Register Corp
723 SEVENTH AVE. NEW YORK CITY
Let us tell you how the Silent Sentinel will Safeguard your BOX OFFICE Receipts and Speed up your Business.

Don't Be In a Hurry!

Just recently, out of a blue sky, there has appeared several makes of double disc record reproducers with amplifiers and loud speakers intended, with musical and effect records, to supplement or replace the orchestra, piano or other common forms of musical accompaniment in Theatres.

And we have heard of several Exhibitors who are worried to death because they cannot sign up for one of these units, immediately, right now and quicker than that.

Keep your shirt on! The form of music you have been using all along will surely do for a short time longer until the situation gets down to common sense, because there are pitfalls galore.

We are interested, naturally, and when we get through investigating we will, we hope, have a unit that will conform to these conditions—

It will be made in Canada as far as possible.

It will be offered you at a price that, we hope, will sound more like sense than some prices we have heard quoted.

It will have proper speed control of the two turntables, proper modulation of the amplification without distortion, a microphone for announcements and special effects and quick changes or fading as required.

It will have interchangeable amplifier units to provide medium or great amount of volume without blasting or distortion according to the requirements of each theatre.

It will have several types of loud speakers available, as what suits one theatre does not suit another on account of the acoustics.

It will be housed in a suitable cabinet of neat design with ready access to records in use and a record cabinet also for storage of all records not in use.

It will be supplemented by a reliable cueing service, giving number of record and name of selection or effect, so that the entire production may be followed and accompanied throughout.

Until you can obtain a unit at a reasonable price that embodies these products why be in such a wild rush? You will hear from us fully on this shortly.

THE COLEMAN ELECTRIC Co. - 258 Victoria St. - Toronto, Ont.

"Courtesy With Service"

No "Doubting Thomas" Is H. M. Thomas

Sold on "Talking Pictures" and Sets Out To Convince Digest.

November 12, 1928.

Dear Miss Lewis:

Way up here in Edmonton, I ran across your opinion regarding "Talking Pictures" as set forth under caption "Ray Presents," — November 3rd issue of "The Digest."

Now, Miss Lewis, for the past two and a half months, I have done nothing but devote my time to sound picture installations, namely: Montreal, Vancouver, Winnipeg and Calgary. Naturally during that time I had an opportunity of studying audience reaction in each city, and from my observation, and it is absolutely unbiased, I am forced to disagree with you, because I found the majority of the public liked and liked very much indeed the sound pictures we presented for their entertainment.

Naturally, some of the audiences did not like the pictures, and said so; but I have yet to start or help start any innovation theatrically that did not cause criticism.

Seven or eight years ago, when we opened the Capitol de luxe houses, we used a policy of symphony orchestras, operatic excerpts and dancing ensembles. Even though we were giving Canadian audiences their first glimpse at de luxe picture presentations, many of the patrons came out, and asked why we did not play more popular music and put more pep into our show.

Several years later, sensing a new idea in picture presentations, we started the band policy of stage offerings. What was the result? We received many letters from outraged patrons saying they were lovers of the classics, and thought it was a shame that we should change our style of entertainment.

However, we felt we were right in our ideas — kept to our policy — with the result that we were extremely successful with the stage band policy.

Then came talking pictures, and our experience has been just the same, as stated above, as with either symphony orchestras or stage jazz bands.

I have been in the show game longer than I want to admit — yet during that entire time I do not remember of having pleased 100 per cent. of any audience.

However, getting back to the subject of talking pictures — I have seen nearly every big special, silent or otherwise, ever made — I have seen their reaction on audiences — east, west, north or south — yet never have I been as thrilled as during the screening of Al Jolson in "The Singing Fool." I felt ashamed of myself, as a tear silently trickled down my cheek — then I looked around and found everybody else having a good cry, so at my second outburst (and I had many during the unfolding of the story) I did not feel so ashamed.

Dear Miss Lewis — do you think any silent picture could have the same effect on an audience, as the scene in the hospital where the little boy, "Sonny," in a faint whisper asks this daddy do sing for him? I've seen Griffith's roaring horsemen in "The Birth of a Nation"; I've seen DeMille's inspiring "King of Kings"; I thought Ingram had about reached the heights of dramatic intensity in "The Four Horsemen" — yet to me personally these all pale into insignificance compared to just one spoken scene in "The Singing Fool."

You may counter — because I must admit you are a good fighter — that your criticism is not based on "Singing Fool," because it has not yet been shown in Canada, but on sound pictures already shown here.

All right — let's take "Mother Knows Best." Just for argument's sake, let's admit that once or twice, the voices do not register perfectly, where have you seen a more dramatic sequence than the finish of this picture. You can not make audiences cry one minute, then cheer the next (and that's just what happened out West) if they are bored or disgusted with the picture, they certainly are going to express their emotions in some other way.

In one or two sound pictures which I have seen, I have noticed musical cueing, which left the wrong impression in the minds of the audience — namely, that the synchronization was bad — whereas while there was singing or whistling heard, this singing or whistling was not being done by the characters shown on the screen.

Naturally, there are yet inconsistencies in sound pictures, but to my mind — and my opinion is based upon talking to many, many people throughout the length and breadth of Canada, talking pictures have been most successfully received, and more of them are being eagerly awaited by the Canadian public at large.

I am not writing you this letter, Miss Lewis, to "break into print," for you have been kind enough several times to want to interview me, but simply because your paper has quite a wide circulation in Canada, is well liked and respected, and it just struck me this fine Thanksgiving morn to "go to bat" for the "talkies."

Cordially yours,

(Sgd.) H. M. THOMAS

Monarch Theatre Fire Creates No Panic

Fire broke out below the stage in the Monarch Theatre, Winnipeg, when the theatre was filled with patrons. Manager Walter Deering quieted the crowd by personal appeals and, with the assistance of the pianist, kept the people from becoming panicky as the theatre became filled with smoke. It required considerable urging to keep the crowd from rushing to the exits, but it was done and no one was injured. The damage was only $100, but before the crowd got out flames were roaring above the screen.

Amusement Tax Manitoba Yields $379,000 Revenue

The Manitoba Amusement Tax yielded the past 12 months the sum of $379,000 to the treasury of Manitoba: the government estimated receipts at $420,000.

Paul Whiteman For Universal Plays Palace

Gave Concert Performance At Massey Hall, Toronto, Thursday.

Paul Whiteman and His Greater Concert Orchestra has been secured by Radio-Keith-Orpheum for an exclusive vaudeville appearance at Keith's Palace Theatre. The engagement which is for a single week during the holiday period, opening Sunday, December 30th, and including the special New Year's Eve performance, is considered one of the most important of the season. To play this week on Broadway, Paul Whiteman is interrupting his present concert tour, which he will resume again in Cincinnati at the end of the Palace engagement. The popular jazz king was anxious to appear in New York and at the Palace for two reasons. It was the scene of his first stage debut seven years ago and also because after this Broadway appearance he does not expect to return to New York again for a considerable time. At the end of his present concert tour, Mr. Whiteman goes to Hollywood to make a super-talkie movie feature for Universal, after which he and his musicians sail for Europe for an extended tour which opens in London.

Following these contracts, Whiteman and his Orchestra will visit Australia for the first time. For the Palace engagement the complete concert orchestra of twenty-six men will be used. The booking was made for the Keith-Albee-Orpheum Vaudeville Exchange by Will McCaffery.

TUBMAN MAKES BID FOR HOLIDAY BUSINESS

Ray Tubman, manager of the Regent and Imperial Theatres, Ottawa, Ontario, made a bid for the Christmas shopping himself when he offered "scrip books" as Christmas gifts. A book containing $10 worth of tickets good at either theatre sells for $8.50 while a $5 book sells for $4.50. They were on sale at both box offices.

Nolan Stages Childrens' Stunt For Avalon

The first special children's matinee at the Avalon Theatre, new house in the Glebe district of Ottawa, was a Santa Claus affair. Kris Kringle himself appeared in a street ballyhoo for the Saturday morning show, the admission for which was 10 cents. The lowest admission price regularly at the Avalon is 20 cents. Arrangements for the stunt were made by Manager Ambrose Nolan.

Round About the Studios

Nina May McKenny, late star in "Blackbirds of 1928," current musical hit, has been given the feminine lead in King Vidor's all-colored picture, "Hallelujah," which is now in production at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio. The cast of this picture, exterior sequences for which were recently made near Memphis, Tenn., includes Honey Brown, Victoria Spivey, Harry Gray, Fannie Belle DeKnight, Everett McGarrity and William Garrison.

The musical synchronization and effects for Pathe's "Show Folks" were recorded recently at Sound Studios in New York under the direction of Josiah Zuro. The dialogue and dance sequences were previously staged at the Studios in Culver City with Eddie Quillan and Lina Basquette acting under the direction of Benjamin Glazer.

Otis Harlan is the most recent addition to the cast of Universal's million dollar all-dialogue production, "Broadway," according to an announcement by Carl Laemmle, Jr., Associate Producer.

Harlan, for 38 years a stage actor, prior to his entry into pictures eight years ago, is enacting the role of "Porky" prominent in the night club rendezvous of the liquor racketeers.

The cast includes Glenn Tryon as the "hoofer;" Evelyn Brent, as Pearl; Merna Kennedy, as Tryon's dancing partner; and Paul Porcasi and Thomas Jackson in the roles they created on the New York stage, the Greek and the detective, respectively.

"Broadway" is being directed by Paul Fejos as his third production for Universal, his first two having been "Lonesome" and "Erik the Great."

An unusually fine cast has been assembled in support of Jerry Drew in his new Educational-Ideal Comedy which is now in production. Vernon Dent, who has been playing opposite Monty Collins, featured comedian in Mermaid Comedies, has a similar supporting role with Drew. Lucille Hutton and Estelle Bradley are in the feminine roles while Clen Cavender also figures prominently in the picture, which is being directed by Stephen Roberts.

Leslie Fenton, who appears as a reporter opposite Phyllis Haver in Pathe's "The Office Scandal," a Fourth Estate Drama, was a cub journalist in New York before he embarked upon a histrionic career.

Estelle Taylor, wife of Jack Dempsey, who has appeared in "Don Juan," "Manhattan Madness," and other screen productions, has been signed for an important part in Lon Chaney's new Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer vehicle, "Where East is East."

This is Chaney's second successive picture with a tropical background.

The new film, which Tod Browning will direct, is a story of the Malay Peninsula, while "West of Zanzibar," the Chaney film which has just been released, has a background of the African jungles.

Marceline Day, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer featured player, who has the lead with Lon Chaney in "The Big City."

Benjamin Glazer, supervisor of the sound division at the Pathe Studios in Culver City, and Edmund Goulding, the latest important addition to his staff were previously associated together in the preparation of the story and adaptation of Colleen Moore's "Happiness Ahead."

"Wild Orchids" is announced as final title for Greta Garbo's latest starring film for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer directed by Sidney Franklin. This is a story of tropical adventure, and Miss Garbo's fellow-countryman, Nils Asther, has the chief masculine role. The story is by John Colton, author of "The Shanghai Gesture."

Dan Roche, Pathe exploitation representative at Chicago, was the guest at a luncheon given by the Chicago Woman's Club in their club rooms at 410 Michigan Avenue recently. The occasion was a meeting of the Moving Picture Committee, and was attended by over 200 members of the club. Several Pathe short subjects were screened after the luncheon and Roche delivered a short talk on "The Problems of the Producer of Today." From one who was present we learn that Dan's talk was well received.

Sophie Tucker, vaudeville headliner and stage favorite, left New York this week for Hollywood to fulfil her contract as a Warner Bros. star, under which her first Vitaphone picture is to be "Honky Tonk." Meanwhile, in anticipation of her arrival, casting of the supporting roles is being completed.

During the past week, J. L. Warner has selected two more players for the line-up — John T. Murray and George Duryea. Audrey Ferris, Lila Lee and Mahlon Hamilton are among others who will appear with Miss Tucker in this story by Leslie S. Barrows which Lloyd Bacon is to direct.

Cecil B. DeMille has announced that Conrad Nagel will have one of the two principal male roles in "Dynamite," the original story by Jeanie MacPherson which will shortly go into production at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio. John Howard Lawson, the young New York playwright who wrote "Processional," has been engaged by DeMille to do the dialogue for this talking picture. No other members of the cast of "Dynamite" have yet been selected.

Following the consummation of negotiations between Joseph I. Schnitzer, President of FBO Productions, Inc., and Florenz Ziegfeld yesterday for the screen rights of "Rio Rita," FBO's first production on the 1929-30 program, in affiliation with Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation, Mr. Schnitzer announces today that he has signed Waring's Pennsylvanians for "Stepping High" (temporary title) an all talkie production for the 1928-29 schedule.

Lon Chaney is busy getting wardrobe fitted for him for his next picture "Where East is East," at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios, although the picture will not start for several days.

"After the clothes are made," explained Chaney, "they will have to be dragged in dust and washed some ten times to age them — hence the early start." The new picture is a jungle drama of Siam, to be directed by Tod Browning.

"Submarine," Columbia's sensational underwater special, continues to gather important contracts both from wired and silent houses. The Stanley-Crandall Circuit has booked the special, both in the silent and "see and hear" version, for early playdates in the following first run houses in Washington, West Virginia and Maryland. The Apollo, Avenue-Grand, Chevy Chase, Savoy, Tivoli, Ambassador, Metropolitan, Earle, Empire, York, New, Colony, Home, and Central in Washington; the Apollo or Grand in Martinsburg, West Virginia, and the Tivoli in Frederick, Maryland.

Walking fish that come from Egypt and that are now in the possession of George Wright, Toronto, are pictured in "Walking Fish," the latest issue Our World Today, Educational's modern screen magazine.

Ray Hallor, who was a prominent child actor with the old Edison Stock Company in 1919, is playing a featured role in Pathe's "Noisy Neighbors."

William Austin, English comedian who was recently seen in "Swim, Girl, Swim," "It," and "Red Hair," has been given the part of Hudkins, the butler, in support of Marion Davies in "The Five O'Clock Girl." Al Green is directing the latter production as a dialogue film at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio.

Joe E. Brown, featured in FBO's talking picture, "The Circus Kid," arrived in New York yesterday to attend the opening of the picture at the Colony Theatre on Saturday.

George B. Seitz directed the production based on a story by James Ashmore Creelman. Frankie Darro and Helene Costello are cast in other important roles.

Mack Sennett's Famous Two-Reel Comedies

Pathe News - Pathe Review - Grantland Rice's Sportlights

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The Spieler

with

Alan Hale, Renee Adoree
Fred Kohler and
Clyde Cook

A Ralph Block Production. Adapted by Hal Conklin and Tay Garnett from an original story by Hal Conklin. Directed by Tay Garnett.

Geraldine

from the story by
Booth Tarkington
with
Eddie Quillan,
Marion Nixon, Gaston Glass and Albert Gran

Supervised by Paul Bern. Directed by Melville Brown.

PHYLLIS HAVER in The Shady Lady

with
Robert Armstrong
and Louis Wolheim

A Ralph Block Production. Title suggested by Leonard Praskins and Richard L. Sharpe. Directed by Edward H. Griffith.

Ned McCobb's Daughter

with IRENE RICH
ROBERT ARMSTRONG,
GEORGE BARRAUD and
THEODORE ROBERTS

Adapted by Beulah Marie Dix from Sidney Howard's Theatre Guild Success. Directed by William J. Cowen.

PHYLLIS HAVER Sal of Singapore

with ALAN HALE and
FRED KOHLER

Adapted by Elliott Clawson from Dale Collins' "The Sentimentalists." Directed by Howard Higgin.

Noisy Neighbors

with EDDIE QUILLAN,
THE QUILLAN FAMILY,
ALBERTA VAUGHN and
THEODORE ROBERTS

Produced by Paul Bern from an original story by F. Hugh Herbert. Directed by Chas. Reisner.

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